

CHRISTIAN SECRETARY.

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"WHAT THOU SEEST, WRITE—AND SEND UNTO THE—CHURCHES."

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CONDITIONS.

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PRIZE ESSAY.

On the Perpetuity and Divine Authority of the Sabbath. By William Jay, Esq. to whom was awarded the premium of one hundred dollars, by a Committee of the Synod of Albany.

Continued from page 133.

Christ himself, far from abolishing the Sabbath, either by his example or his precepts, vindicated it from the traditional superstition of the Pharisees, explained its nature, and showed that, as it was designed for the benefit of mankind, it did not prohibit acts of mercy and necessity. As the fourth commandment formed a part of the moral law of God, and was independent of Christianity, for either its origin or sanction; it is only incidentally alluded to by Christ and his apostles. — Had there been no condemnation of theft in the New Testament, stealing would still have been sinful, because forbidden by the decalogue, and for the same reason, the obligation of the Sabbath required no confirmation from the Christian dispensation.

But it is contended, that St. Paul admits the abolition of the Sabbath, when, in addressing the Colossians, he says, "Let no man judge you, therefore, in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath day." St. Paul is speaking of the abrogation of the Mosaic ritual, and we know that by that ritual certain days were set apart as sacred feasts, on which the people were required to abstain from labour. Thus the 1st 10th, and 15th days of the seventh month were distinguished as "holy convocations," on which the Jews were to do "no servile work," and, therefore, each of these days is expressly called "a Sabbath," (Lev. xxiii.) The seventh day of the week, was, by pre-eminence, "the Sabbath," and it is not to this, but to the other days on which rest was enjoined, that the apostle refers.

It is urged, however, that, admitting the fourth commandment to be of perpetual obligation, it must be obligatory as respects the seventh day of the week. The Sabbath may be considered as consisting of two parts; first, the holy rest it requires, and secondly, the day on which this rest is to be observed. It is obvious that there can be no other moral connexion between this rest and the day appropriated to it, than the celebration of some event which that day commemorates. — Infinite wisdom, as has already been observed, selected the seventh day, because it was the first that had witnessed the perfect creation; and as that was the greatest display of divine power and goodness known to man, there was a peculiar fitness in selecting this day for the observance of that holy rest which the Creator established for the temporal and spiritual comfort and happiness of His creatures. The work of redemption, however, is a still more glorious and stupendous exhibition of the divine attributes, and more worthy of the praise and adoration of man; hence the same reasons which at first led to the selection of the last day of the week, render it highly proper that the Sabbath should now be observed on the day which witnessed the Saviour's triumph over death and the grave, and the accomplishment of the redemption of a fallen world.

"If Christ be not risen," says the volume of inspiration, "your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins."

We are reminded, however, of the declaration of Christ, that not one jot or tittle should pass from the law, and it is affirmed, that if the day of the Sabbath has been changed, a portion of the commandment has, in contradiction to that declaration, been repealed. — The words of the commandment are, "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work,

but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God," &c. The term "seventh day" is here used, and, perhaps, designedly, in an indefinite sense, and may as well refer to the six preceding days of labor, as to the last day of the week; and especially, as no mention is made of the week. It ought to be remembered, that, although the seventh day of the week was selected for the Sabbath, yet that the selection was made prior to the delivery of the decalogue, and that the observance of this day from the creation, rendered it unnecessary to specify it in the commandment. — Under the Jewish dispensation, the expression, "the seventh day," would naturally be understood as referring to the last day of the week; while, under the Christian dispensation, the expression will equally apply to the day succeeding to the six days of labor. Hence the commandment is literally binding upon Christians; and is literally obeyed by those who observe the Sabbath on the first day of the week.

Again we are told, that, admitting no particular day in the week is pointed out in the fourth commandment, as the Sabbath, yet we know that a certain day, was in fact, selected by divine appointment, and that no other day can lawfully be substituted by human authority. To this assertion we readily assent, and we find in the universal observance of the first day of the week, by the Christian world for many centuries, strong and presumptive evidence, that this change was enjoined by Christ, who, probably in reference to this very event, declared Himself to be "Lord even of the Sabbath day."

As there would have been no propriety in observing the first day of the week, before our Saviour's resurrection, the change that was afterwards to take place was not announced in His public instructions, and He left it to his apostles to introduce the Christian Sabbath, when the reason for the change could be understood by all. It is most probable that the apostles received their instruction on this subject, in the interval between the resurrection and ascension of their Master. Our Lord seems also to have pointed out the first day of the week, as a season peculiarly appropriated to his service, by meeting with his disciples on two successive Sundays, and absenting Himself, during the intervening week, and afterwards in the visible descent of the Holy Spirit on the same day of the week.

That the first day of the week was observed in the time of the apostles, is evident, from the application given to it by St. John, of "the Lord's day," and likewise from an incident in the history of St. Paul. From a careful examination of Acts xx. 6 and 7, it appears that St. Paul arrived at Troas on Tuesday; and yet it was not until the ensuing Sunday, that he met with the disciples, to break bread and to preach to them. That it was the custom of the primitive Christians to assemble on Sunday, is also evident from St. Paul's directions to the Corinthians, relative to a collection about to be made for certain necessitous brethren. — "Upon the first day of the week, let every one of you lay by him in store as God has prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come." (1 Cor. xvi. 12.) It necessarily follows, from this direction, that the Corinthians were in the habit of assembling together on the first day of the week, and that when thus assembled, they were "to lay by," that is, deposit in a common fund, their charitable contributions, for otherwise, the object of the apostle, "that there be no gatherings when I come," would have been defeated. It appears that similar directions were given to "the churches of Galatia;" and hence we have a right to infer, that Sunday was observed in all the churches founded by the apostles; and the practice of the apostles was equivalent to a command to all their followers. The authority for substituting the first for the last day of the week, must, indeed, have been indisputable, since, for several centuries after this innovation, its propriety was never questioned by Christians of any name or sect. The writings of the early fathers, afford unequivocal proof, that the primitive Christians observed the first day of the week as their Sabbath.

Ignatius, a companion of the apostles says, in so many words, "Let us no more sabbatize;" that is, keep the Jewish sabbath: "but let us keep the Lord's day, on which our Life arose." Justin Martyr, who lived at the close of the first, and the beginning of the second century, says, "On the day called Sunday, is an assembly of all who live in the city or country, and the memoirs of the apostles, and the writings of the prophets," that is, the Old and New Testaments, "are read." For this he assigns the reasons of the Christians, viz "That it was the day on which the creation of the world began, and on which Christ arose from the dead." Irenæus, a disciple of Polycarp, the disciple of St. John himself, who lived in the second century, says, "On the Lord's day every one of us Christians keeps the Sabbath, meditating in the law," or scriptures, "and rejoicing in the works of God." Dionysius, Bishop of Corinth, who lived in the time of Irenæus, that is, in the second century, says, in his letter to the church at Rome, "To-day we celebrate the Lord's day, when we read your epistle to us." Tertullian, who lived in the second century, speaks of the Lord's day as a "Christian solemnity;" and asserts that some of the heathens fancied that the sun was the God of the Christians because they celebrated the first day of the week.

Origen, who lived in the second century, urges the duty of prayer, "especially on the Lord's day, which is a commemoration of Christ's passion."

Eusebius, who lived at the close of the third, and beginning of the fourth century, declares that "from the beginning the Christians did assemble on the first day of the week, called by them the Lord's day, for the purpose of religious worship."

To these testimonies may be added that of Pliny, who in his celebrated letter to Trajan, written about the year 107, speaking of certain Christians who had been arraigned before him, observes, "They affirmed that they were wont to meet together on a stated day, before it was light, and sing among themselves alternately a hymn to Christ, as to God."

No sooner did Christianity become the religion of the state, than the arm of the magistrate was interposed to protect the Sabbath from profanation. Constantine, the first Christian emperor, about the year 300, issued a decree forbidding all labour, except that of husbandry, on Sunday, (dies solis,) and he excuses this exception, on the plea of frequent necessity. Whatever opinion we may form of the sincerity of Constantine's conversion, this edict affords indisputable evidence of the practice of the Christian church in that age; and that, in the judgement of Constantine and his advisers, the principles of the religion he had embraced, imperiously demanded the sanctification of the Sabbath day. Although the great majority of his subjects were pagans; and notwithstanding the toleration he allowed them in their opinions and worship, he still required them to abstain from labour on the first day of the week. It is also worthy of remark, that he calls Sunday "the venerable day," an epithet that would have been inapplicable, had not this day been long distinguished for its peculiar sanctity.

The authorities we have cited prove beyond all doubt, that the Christian church from the time of the apostles, acknowledged and observed a weekly Sabbath. If the Sabbath was abolished by Christ, then has his church been guilty of perpetuating this ordinance, in opposition to His will, and in defiance to His authority: and it was led into this crime, if not by the express directions, at least by the countenance and connivance of His inspired apostles! When we consider the nature and practical influence of this institution, it seems absolutely indispensable, not only to the extension, but to the very existence of Christianity. We are at a loss to conceive how its doctrines could have been promulgated, and its ordinances administered, unless a periodical cessation from labour had permitted all classes of society regularly to assemble for religious worship and instruction. — "Take this day from the calendar of the Christian, and all that remains will be cloudy and cheerless. Religion will instantly decay; ignorance, error, and vice, will immediately triumph; the sense of duty vanish; morals fade away; the acknowledgement, and even the remembrance, of God, be far removed from mankind; the glad tidings of salvation cease to sound, and the communication between earth and heaven be cut off forever." And did the Redeemer of the world abolish an institution thus important to the church, which He purchased with his own blood; and is He indebted for the purity and extension of that church to an act of bold rebellion to His own authority? And shall we dare to ascribe to man, whose breath is in his nostrils, and whose very blood

is foolishness with God, the transcendent blessings and enjoyments of the Sabbath, and deny the glory of it to Him, whose work is perfect, and whose ways are judgement?

In the garden of Paradise, our first parents were blessed with a returning day of rest and praise; and after the waters of the deluge had testified the wrath of an offended God, the Sabbath, like the bow in the firmament, was a pledge of His mercy and loving kindness. The descendants of Noah, while they spread themselves over the face of the earth, carried with them their veneration for this holy day; and continued to distinguish it from others, and to use it in the computation of their time, long after the remembrance of its institution, and of the duties to which it had been appropriated, had been buried beneath the load of idolatrous observances. On Mount Sinai, the voice of the Almighty was heard to proclaim, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy," and for a long series of ages, this command, recorded on stone by the Deity Himself, was preserved with circumstances of unexampled reverence and dignity, and honoured by a miraculous emblem of the divine presence. This precept, and the other commands of the decalogue, were delivered, recorded, and preserved, in a manner peculiarly calculated to distinguish them from the temporal institutions of the Mosaic dispensation, and at the time when that dispensation was about to terminate, the Saviour of the world solemnly declared to the assembled multitude, that "till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle should in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." As Lord of the Sabbath, He substituted the day of his own resurrection, for the one originally appointed; and He honoured this day by selecting it for the descent of the Holy Spirit upon his apostles, endowing them with power to proclaim the everlasting gospel to all nations, and kindreds, and tongues. From that time to the present, the Christian Sabbath has been acknowledged by every nation professing the name of Christ; nor will the obligation to observe it, cease to be binding upon every individual of the human family, to whom the gospel has been communicated, till he shall have been removed into the regions of despair, or shall have entered on that eternal Sabbath, which remaineth for the people of God.

It is foreign to the design of this essay, to expatiate on the various benefits which the Sabbath confers on nations and individuals. It is sufficient to remark, that it has contributed more than any human institution whatever, to the peace and good order of society, and to the comfort and happiness of its several members; and that the degree of reverence with which it is regarded, affords, in general, a safe and accurate criterion of public and individual morality. With respect to the duties connected with this holy season, we will only observe, that, although many may innocently and sincerely differ as to minute points of practice, yet no one can doubt for a moment that the command to keep holy this day for the purposes of religion, and consequently forbids us to devote it to the ordinary business and amusements of life. The excitements of avarice and the allurements of pleasure, may, indeed, tempt us to frame excuses for appropriating to ourselves that time which our Maker has consecrated to His own service, but conscience will deride our vain and impious endeavours; and the terrors of the last day will vindicate an ordinance, coeval and commensurate with the existence of the world.

From the Sunday School Magazine. TEACHERS SHOULD NOT DESERT THEIR WORK.

Were we to hear that our missionaries at India, or the Sandwich Islands, had relinquished their employment because they had found it connected with self-denials and difficulties, we should at once express our regret and condemn them. What shall we then say concerning some of our Sunday-school teachers, who while they enjoy the blessings of home and religious privileges, leave their work because it is attended by a few sacrifices. We must say that they have never learned such an example from Christ. Had he avoided self-denials, the light of salvation had never illumined our apostate world. Had the apostles and devoted missionaries avoided them, the gospel had not made its present march among the nations of the earth. But let us examine the difficulties with which teachers meet, and ascertain whether they afford suffi-

cient reasons why they should neglect or desert their work.

One source of their trial is, that some of their pupils receive little or no benefit from their instructions. These pupils perhaps discover much volatility, perverseness of temper, heedlessness, and indolence. The evil example which they witness during the week, has an injurious effect upon them.

Teachers are soon discouraged with them. — They also find it contrary to their own ease to repeat the retired labours of the school room every Sabbath — to sacrifice many a pleasant hour, which they could profitably spend in reading, reflection and devotion — to give up the satisfaction of visiting friends abroad, lest they be absent from their classes on the Sabbath. During the week, a pressure of anxiety, too, in relation to their schools, necessarily rests upon them. Some of their time must be taken up in preparing to give instructions on the Lord's day. They do not perhaps receive that patronage from their ministers and from members of their congregations, which they could desire.

Ought not these trials, then, to induce them to neglect or abandon their work? I answer, "They ought not to neglect or abandon it, because it is a work of such importance."

The children whom they instruct cannot be converted except through the instrumentality of the truth, and many of them are entirely dependent on teachers to instruct them in it. By their labours they are increasing mental and religious improvement. Thus they are aiding in giving an important character to our nation — one which will have a material effect upon the world.

Their work is intended to rescue souls from the rubbish of sin and ignorance, and to place them among those moral gems, which shall brighten to all eternity.

If they were engaged in any important business of a worldly nature, they would not think because it subjects them to toils, cares and trials, they might be excused from their engagements.

They would blame a devoted minister if he were to abandon his work because it is attended by fatigue, solicitude and self-denials. Their work is next to his in importance, — but it has far less trials. What plausible excuse can they then have for their neglecting or relinquishing their work, because it is attended with hardships?

2. If they neglect or desert it, it will have an injurious effect upon others. A band of persons who are engaged in any project, generally lose a portion of their strength and courage when some of their number yield to discouragements, and leave them. The conductors of a school are inefficient and are afflicted, if some of their laborers, on account of a few self-denials, desert their work. The order and plans of the school become deranged, and pupils obtain the impression from such conduct, that Sunday schools are but of little importance. The classes which these persons leave, are perhaps soon dispersed; or if they remain, it is several weeks before they become acquainted with their new teachers.

3. They ought not to desert it, because it is a work on which the great Head of the church, in many places, is pleased to smile.

He is every week raising up new friends to be employed in it. Within a few years it has extended its influence into the different provinces of Europe. In its advancement, it has reached our missionary stations, dissipating the darkness of heathenism. In our own land, it has called forth the feelings and prayers of many a pious minister and parent. Some teachers have found that this work has been blessed to their advances in a life of holiness, and has given them habits of usefulness.

Others will have occasion for everlasting gratitude because it has been instrumental in converting them to God. Some schools have recently been visited by the influences of the Holy Spirit. Armies of little pilgrims have commenced their march to brighter realms. Hundreds of teachers, who a year ago were in a state of spiritual death, have awoke, and enlisted under the banner of that God whose kingdom is not of this world. This work has poured light upon the grave of many a departed teacher and pupil. Since God smiles upon it so propitiously, it is unreasonable for teachers to neglect or relinquish it because it subjects them to self-denials.

4. They should not do it, because there is such painful need of more teachers. Instead of sparing one who has devo-

ted himself to this work, thousands this moment are needed to enlist. The schools in our land, are yet in their incipient state; and much additional labour is requisite to mature our system.

In many places they are small and merely nominal. Traverse every city and section of country throughout the United States, and you will find that the number of labourers is not adequate to one tenth part of the field. To place the thousands of wretched children in our cities, under the culture of Sunday-schools—to instruct the children of the rich, and to extend religious knowledge among the children of the country—much additional assistance is necessary. Every teacher who is therefore engaged, must stand at his post. He must not shrink from his work because it is connected with a few personal sacrifices, but extend his arms to draw others into the same labour.

A. J.

Revival in the Episcopal Church, Bristol, Penn.—An increasing seriousness is becoming more generally manifest, but especially among such as were formerly professors of divine truth, the most of whom seem actuated by new hopes, new aversions, and new desires: and we have the happiness of enumerating at least fourteen or fifteen souls, who before were dead in trespasses and sins, but are now brought into the field of Christ, who are rejoicing in hope of the glory of God: and who give the most scriptural and satisfactory evidence of their having been born again and renewed in the spirit of their minds. Besides, on Sunday last, being Whit-Sunday, when, assisted in the services of the day by the late very useful and much beloved pastor, the Rev. Mr. Hall, we had a Pentecost season indeed. Ten new communicants, all of whom as we trust, are subjects of grace, were added; between fifteen and twenty, whom from various circumstances, had for several years unhappily retired from the communion of the church, were re-instated in their former privileges; and the Spirit of God was, although not so miraculously as of old, not less really present with us in our assembly. The accession to our communion on the occasion of the administration of this ordinance, and on a previous one, about which time we date the commencement of the increased seriousness manifested among us, constitutes the number added, within two months past, of from thirty to thirty-five.

I accompany this brief sketch with but one remark. Are there are any who affect to disbelieve in seasons of more than ordinary excitement, or in times of more peculiar refreshing from the presence of the Lord, and the glory of his power?—My reply is, let such visit upon occasions of the kind, and if their minds are not blinded by prejudice, and their hearts deliberately steeled against impressions, they will and must believe that the work is not of man, but of God.

We learn that Rev. Mr. Bourne, English Missionary at Honduras, was married on the 30th ult. to Miss Mehitabel Harris, member of the first Baptist Church in Salem, Massachusetts. Immediately after the marriage, a prayer meeting was held in the vestry, when Mr. Bourne gave a statement of some circumstances connected with his labours.

His station is at the mouth of the River Balize, at a town of the same name, containing a population of about 10,000, partly European and partly Creole and Indian. No provision had been made in this place, for religious instruction, except that the Chaplain of the British garrison performed a service on the Sabbath. Mr. Bourne was sent there about 3 years since, and had succeeded in gathering a congregation, in which there had been about 30 hopeful conversions. A Sabbath School had been established through his influence, and he had assisted in introducing free Schools; in which were now about 200 scholars. A wide field of usefulness is thus opened for him.

Mrs. Bourne will accompany her husband on his return to this station, and they are about embarking from Boston. They will go with the prayers of many endeared friends; and we hope we may add, with the prayers of all the friends of Missions.—*R. I Religious Messenger.*

SUNDAY SCHOOL ANECDOTES.

A little girl came voluntarily to her teacher, and presented the tickets she had been collecting for some time, observing that she could not think of receiving any more; that she thought it sinful to receive pay for learning the word of God when it was so great a favour. Her teacher remarked, that she had better keep them until she had procured enough to purchase a large Bible. With child-like simplicity, lifting up the little Bible she held in her hand, she asked, "Does not this contain all that is in a larger one?"

A girl of about twelve years of age, who had given up attending a Sabbath School, on being reproved by her father for neglecting to commit to memory her questions, she said, "Father, how can you make me get questions when you

yourself neither pray, nor read, nor ask a blessing on your food when you take it?"

THE WORK OF A BISHOP.

A sermon recently preached at an ordination in the western part of the state of New-York, and published in the Baptist Register, contains the following paragraph:—

"The work of a bishop requires his undivided attention. Speculating and worldly ministers are a reproach to the Christian name. Hence the apostle, after having exhorted Timothy to the observance of certain duties, observes, 'Meditate on these things; give thyself wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear unto all.' It is impossible for a minister to be of the same service to the church whose attention is divided between the church and the world; and it is believed that if churches studied their own souls' good, and the good of the cause generally, they would to the utmost of their ability disengage their ministers from the cares and perplexities of the world. Churches should do all they can for the support of the minister, and the minister should study economy, and put them to no unnecessary and unreasonable expense; and if any professing to be called of God to preach the gospel, will not give themselves wholly and exclusively to the work of a bishop, when the church will enable them to do so, but will still give themselves in part to the world, they should be dismissed as no longer worthy to have the oversight of the flock of God. What! shall a man who professes to watch for souls as one that must give account, enter in the grovelling speculations of this fading world?—Never, never."

A few words to children.—If you feared God, you could not take his holy name in vain. I hope there are not many children who ever do this; for it is a most shocking thing to bear a child swear! But such things have been, and I do not know but some of you do it. God knows. And if you do not repent, he will bring you into judgement. But if you could learn to fear the Lord, you would never speak another wicked word; because it is offensive to him; and he is very angry with such; and all swearers and liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone.

If you feared God, you would avoid bad company. A good child would almost as soon go among a parcel of bears and wolves, as he would among a number of lying, swearing, quarrelling children: because he is afraid they will make him as bad as themselves. Children learn a great many wicked things one from another.

From the Anti-Universalist.

TARDY THE PIRATE IN HEAVEN?

Such is the fact if Universalism is true! We cannot say for a certainty that it is not the happy destiny of this ante-sainted hero; but I ask who can soberly and deliberately believe it? In all such cases, Universalists are not at liberty, like other people to suspend their judgement, as to the future welfare of the dead, and to cry with trembling uncertainty, respecting the departed, immortal spirit, *where is it?* to what region has it gone? and what will be its condition in an eternal scene? But they must of necessity send all to heaven, however heaven-daring and enormous may be their deeds! Yes, Tardy, that monster of cruelty and crime, who had spent his life to all appearance under the instigation and inspiration of the unmerciful powers of hell! whose hands were still red with the blood of those into whom his murderous dagger had been plunged, and who in the hurry of passion, in the rage of plunder, died with the deepest stains of piracy and murder, adds the climax to his crimes! This monster is a child of God, and is now happy in his love, by a hasty act of self-destruction!! Yes, with all these flagrant and atrocious enormities on his head, Universalists must believe in his saintship and salvation! According to their system, the murdered crew and their cruel murderer soon united heart and hand in all the harmony and bliss of heaven!

This is sufficient to stagger credulity itself, and we should think that all candid men would begin to doubt the truth of a system which involves them in so much absurdity, and lays such an enormous tax upon their reasoning powers.

The following timely remarks appeared in the Waterville Intelligencer, Maine, of the 6th inst. as in many respects they apply with equal force and propriety to this state, we insert them that they may "provoke to love and to good works" some whose "pure minds" need to be stirred up to duty in relation to the cause of God among us.—*Ed. Sec.*

From the Intelligencer.

Mr. Editor.—As the time is near when the several associations in this state, are expected to convene, I take the liberty to suggest a few thoughts on the subject, to the Baptist churches, through the medium of your paper.

Respecting the meeting of associations, it is important to consider two things—

the object of these meetings, and the best manner to obtain that object. The objects designed by these meetings are purely religious. They are, in connexion with the glory of God, that members of the same religious community may form, and perpetuate christian union, in feeling, design, and mode of operation in the concerns of religion. That they may "stir up each others pure minds by way of remembrance," "provoke one another to love and to good works."

To accomplish these objects, let brethren divest themselves of all selfishness. Let them be much in prayer at home and on their way thither, that they may possess a humble and quiet spirit,—may enjoy the Divine presence while there, and "that no root of bitterness springing up may trouble them whereby some may be defiled." Let ministers come prepared to alarm the thoughtless, and instruct the ignorant as well as to warm the stupid. Let prayer, preaching, singing, and exhortation occupy as much of the time as possible. If, instead of these devotional exercises, the time should be mostly taken up in business, accompanied with unprofitable debate, the objects of the meeting will not be obtained, people will retire disappointed, our associations will lose their savoury influence, and we be compelled to see inscribed upon these temples "Ichabod! the glory is departed."

And as these associations are a kind of auxiliary missionary societies, especially for domestic missions, let the subject of missions be taken into serious consideration by the churches before they send their messengers.

Much is said of the number and prosperity of the Baptists in Maine. But what are we doing as a denomination when money is wanting? To be sure we are doing something. But what are we doing compared with others? The congregational denomination in Maine are supposed to be less in number than the Baptist, yet according to the report of their Domestic Missionary Society, lately published, \$1634 was received into the Treasury of that Society the past year.

Forty-three missionaries were employed, whose united labours amounted to more than nine years. Thus while we withhold, help is arising to Him from another quarter. But while we commend them for their zeal, let us not be slothful, but "be followers of them which through faith and patience inherit the promises." And as the present season has been thus far crowned, in an unusual manner, with the divine goodness, let us cheerfully give him the "first fruits of all our increase." And let us remember that "the Lord loveth a cheerful giver."

LINCOLN.

For the Christian Secretary.

CONSOLATION IN DEATH.

I am not without the hope, that should you deem this narrative worthy of publication, it may, under the influence of the Divine Spirit, be the means of refreshing and encouraging the poor trembling believer, to rely with more confidence on the promises of a faithful and covenant keeping God—while those who have a conviction that all is not well with them, and that they are liable every moment to be summoned into the eternal world, may be excited from the manifestations of Divine Goodness exhibited in this instance, to throw down the weapons of their rebellion, and enjoy the same hopes and consolations.

The subject of this notice had received a religious education, and when about 13 years of age, became a hopeful subject of Divine grace. Soon after which, he made a public profession of his attachment to the cause of Christ—as he advanced in life, and mingled with its interests and solicitudes, possessing the full glow of youth and health, and activity, the world and sensible objects, as is often the case, occupied too many of his thoughts—a deadness as to spiritual things succeeded; and amidst the apparent prosperity with which he was for a season encircled, he was unhappy. In this situation he remained for several years; he felt that he had left his first love, and the awful denunciations of the Divine word seemed to be pointed against him. At length, the Lord looked upon him in pity; he visited him in mercy, by taking from him, in quick succession, his two only children; and almost at the same time, threw a dark shade over his pecuniary prospects. These sudden, and combined, and remarkable visitations, arrested his thoughts—he saw, he acknowledged, he lamented his wanderings: this was about two years previous to his last illness. He now began to be more actively engaged in the sphere in which he moved, in endeavouring to promote the cause of the Redeemer; and although he still complained much of darkness of mind, and the want of that cheering and lively evidence of his adoption which is so desirable—though still doubting and anxious respecting his own adoption, he was regular in his attendance upon the word and ordinances, and active in religious duties. In the month of November last, he was suddenly attacked with a hemorrhage of the lungs. During the early part of his sickness, until 14 days before his departure, while he felt and acknowledged the great truths of the gospel, and had a desire for the prosperity of Zion, his views of his personal interest in the exceeding great and precious promises of the gospel, were dark and dis-

couraging—the Bible was his constant companion, and the great concerns of eternity deeply engaged his attention. When he ascertained that his state was considered very dangerous, his soul was in distress—after a sleepless night, spent in tears and in supplication, the Saviour appeared amidst the storm, and said to his soul, "I am thy great salvation." A short time after this I called upon him—I approached his bed-side—I observed a great alteration in his countenance, and asked him how his mind was: his reply was, "I am happy." I asked him if he had been favoured with any peculiar, or striking manifestation of Divine love: he replied, "the Lord has given me strong faith, and enabled me to see clearly that I am his adopted child, and I feel happy." Many Christian friends called to see him through the day. To one he said, "Dear Brother, we have travelled a little way together here, but we shall spend an eternity together." In the course of the day, I asked him if he felt happy in the prospect of leaving the world, "O yes," he replied, with the most perfect composure and solemnity, and with a smile, "I have been waiting for several hours for my change to come." To an aged mother in Israel, who called to see him, he reached out his hand as she approached the bed, and said with a heavenly smile, "have you come too?" "We!" said he "you see I am going home before you." He then fixed his eyes on her with a full expression of delight, and repeated several times, "dear good woman." He then requested one of the Christian friends to pray—at his request I read to him the 103d Psalm; also several hymns and chapters. We were at this time, and indeed every moment until he finally ceased to breathe, constantly expecting the last struggle to be at hand. I asked him if he had any word to leave to his aged parents; he said, "Dear aged parents, it was my desire to see them again in the flesh, but the Lord has otherwise determined—I submit." His little boy, about 18 months old, was brought to him to have him look upon him for the last time. He fixed his eyes on him, and raising his hand over him, and lifting up his eyes, said, "the Lord bless thee my son, and early bring thee to the knowledge of Jesus." During the succeeding night, his mind seemed to be much occupied with the church of which he was a member,—he said they were a little band, but they must cling together, and desired they would follow him in a body, to the grave; and requested that Mr. R. would preach his funeral sermon. I asked him if he would not prefer to live, he said, if it were the will of the Lord, he should like to continue here a few days, to make some further arrangements in his temporal affairs; but he added, "I leave that, the Lord knows best." The hymn in Rippon's collection was read to him, which commences with the words "Be gone, unbefield, my Saviour is near:" at the close of the last line but one, he seemed much animated, and exclaimed with delight, "And then O how pleasant the conqueror's song." Many friends had called in to see him in the course of the day—he at length said his strength was so exhausted that it agitated him to see so much company, and prevented his fixing his mind on spiritual things as much as he wished. At 10 o'clock in the evening I said to him, I am writing to your parents, informing them of your consolation. He seemed much animated and said, "it will be a great comfort to them." "I shall see them soon,"—"to die is the shortest way to see them after all." To the enquiry whether he still felt peace, he replied, "yes—yes." The next morning he said to me, "I have always expected that on leaving the world, I should be left to darkness and despondency, and it is astonishing to me, when I reflect on my unprofitable life, that I should be thus favoured.—I did not expect it.—How good the Lord is." At 12 o'clock at night he said, "Now I want to be left alone, to examine if I have not been deceived in regard to the great concerns of my soul."

At about 2 o'clock in the morning, he called his afflicted companion and me to his bed-side—he desired us to sit down by him—he then said, "It is an awful thing to be deceived, especially on the very brink of eternity." I want to have you repeat to me, what I have expressed to you of my exercises for several days past, for my mind is weak, and I cannot call them distinctly to my recollection. We then repeated many things which he had said. We also repeated many passages of scripture, which appeared to be suited to his situation. We pointed him to the faithfulness of Jesus, and the infinite safety of those who had fled to Him for refuge. After a pause, he said, "I am comforted," "My mind is at peace." He then spoke of the compassion of our Saviour to Peter, and made several striking remarks relative to our Lord's bearing with the weakness of that disciple. This was a severe conflict, but during the whole of it he discovered nothing like terror or alarm, but he was very calm, solemn and impressive. The hymn to which I last alluded, was then read again to him, and again he repeated with emphasis, "And then, O how pleasant the conqueror's song." I then, at his request, read several appropriate passages

of scripture to him, which appeared greatly to refresh his soul: he then said, "How good the Lord is, to permit me to depart with so little bodily pain." To be continued.

CHRISTIAN SECRETARY.

HARTFORD, SATURDAY, SEPT. 15, 1827.

"Do thyself no harm, we are all here."

The following very appropriate defence of INFANT SPRINKLING, is from the "Religious Intelligencer, of the 26th July, headed

INFANT BAPTISM.

"Although we believe Baptism to be a divine ordinance, once delivered to the saints, yet we have heretofore, cautiously, and designly, avoided making it a subject of controversy; preferring, rather, to suffer slander and reproach, even in the house of our friends, than to call up any unchristian feelings in those with whom we differ. Regardless of the many hard sayings, challenges and denunciations, made by our Baptist brethren, in the religious publications devoted to their interests, we have pursued a course, which we thought would best promote the cause of religion generally, and the salvation of souls, without regard to any sectarian interests. But while we have been thus engaged, they have been bending all their efforts, to disseminate and inculcate their own peculiar sentiments. Not content with excluding their own offspring from the church of God, and baptizing members of their own communion by immersion, they have denounced all who differ from them, as *heathen and unbelievers*. They appear to attach as much consequence to the act of being plunged all over, in water, as they do to the ordinance of baptism itself, when there is no command, nor a word of proof in the Bible, that any one was ever baptized by immersion in the days of the Apostles, or the early ages of the Christian church. From the manner in which accounts of revivals of religion are given, one would suppose that *water* 'cleanseth from all sin'—that there was no other test of conversion—no other way out on Christ—to die unto sin—to be planted into the likeness of his death, but to be buried under water."

"The Christian Secretary," a paper "published at Hartford, for the Connecticut Baptist Convention," and by them highly approved and recommended, at their late meeting, for its moderation and ability, among a hundred like sayings, contains the following:

"Hence, its professed advocates being judges, we are constrained to believe *infant baptism, or unbeliever's baptism*, a human invention, originating in the same age, and supported by the same authority, as spells, exorcisms, prayer for the dead, the invocation and canonization of the saints, purgatory, religious festivals, infant communion, &c. and if that is right, so also are these."

"The first Lord's day in the present month, was a very solemn and interesting day in Newton. The first Congregational Church in the town received thirty additional members, fifteen of whom, we understand, had water applied to the face. The Baptists received nineteen additional members. All of whom went down into the water, and were buried with Christ in baptism—were planted together in the likeness of his death."

"Nothing but immersion is valid baptism." "We view Pedobaptists in general, unqualified for the ordinance of the Lord's Supper. That this disqualification consists principally in a want of piety, of orthodoxy and baptism."

The above quotations, detached from their connection, are exhibited to prove the correctness of the above charges.

"Although it is a light thing to be judged of men, yet we are sorry to see nine-tenths of the Christian church anathematized, because they do not understand the scriptures in the same light with their more favoured brethren. We are sorry for the cause of religion to have such unchristian, such *pharisaical* language published to the world, by those whom we love and wish to treat as brethren in Christ, although they may be too pure and holy to acknowledge us as such."

In the remarks which we have published in preceding numbers, it has been clearly shewn, from scripture, that infants were circumcised and admitted into covenant with God, on the faith of parents; and that parents are still under obligations, enforced by the command of God, to dedicate their children to him in baptism. That this was so understood by the Apostles, is evident, from their practice of baptizing men and their households, or families, without any directions to exclude infants; and it is farther evident from the *fact that Infant Baptism was uniformly practised by the Christian Church, without opposition* even from the days of the Apostles, till within three or four centuries of the present time."

Here the Editor of the "Intelligencer," whose zeal, to say the least, is full equal to his candour; after telling us how self-denying, kind, and tender hearted he has been; and how solicitous for the progress of truth, in so much, that he has heretofore even failed to vindicate that which he believed to be truth, lest it should give offence, has been driven at last, as he would have us understand, to take the field in order to repel the "slanders and reproach," which we have heaped upon his household. But it would seem that he forgot all his good feelings before he closed his first period, and has permitted himself to be led on by passion or prejudice, or both, to say things, which if he has become cool, we think he will not attempt to justify.

As the "Intelligencer" has singled out the "Secretary," as the principal author of the high-handed wickedness of which he complains, we of course are called upon to reply, and we embrace this opportunity to beg pardon for not doing it more seasonably.

Permit us then to enquire, 1st. Is it true, as asserted by the Intelligencer, that we, as the conductors of the "Secretary," have been bending all our efforts to disseminate, and inculcate our own *peculiar* sentiments? Or have the Baptist denomination as a body, thus acted, to the total neglect of other parts of "the whole counsel of God?" Let our pages, and let the labours of our brethren, answer before the bar of an enlightened public.

Certified from Record,
OLIVER PEASE, Judge.
Sept. 3, 1827. 3w32

POETRY.

For the Christian Secretary.
THE SEASONS SPIRITUALIZED.
NO. 2.—SUMMER.

Can Summer no themes to the Muses supply,
Nor open a fund whence reflections to draw?
Shall Pleiades and Sirius silent roll by,
Nor poet, nor soph note their beauties with awe?
While now the bright lamp of Aurora appears,
High beaming in solstitial Cancer to greet
With balmy effulgence the North hemisphere,
And zone of chill Arctus with æstival heat;
Do we now reflect that unless in our breast
The lamp of the gospel its splendour display,
In darkness most gross we're involv'd and oppress'd,
Excluded from light and the regions of day?
And while vegetation's fleet growth we behold,
And grasses and esculents fondly we eye;
Shall we not examine if grace in the soul
With external objects in crescence can vie?
As now the celestial rotations returns,
Bold Leo to rule on his throne o'er the signs,
Whose empire is only where Aëstivus burns,
Whose nature both power and mercy combines;
Shall we not with candour examine our heart,
To see if the Lion of Judah there sway
His life-giving sceptre, his fervour impart,
His strength wake our fear, and his mercy allay?
While far o'er the meadows the mower doth wheel
His serpentine course, sweeping all in his sight,
And deals the death blows with his glistening steel,
Nor blossoms, or grasses his pity excite;
O must not our mind be impressed with the truth,
That death with his weapon stalks potent around,
Nor stays the dire stroke or for manhood or youth,
Promiscuously giving the incurable wound?
When fields of their robes of exuberance green,
Embellish'd with hues so enchantingly gay,
Are stript and lamenting their losses are seen,
Bereft of their charms in one ill-fated day;
Must we not remember on beauty nor wealth,
To place our affections, since soon they must fail;
Or allow the subjects of blasting or stealth,
May leave us the loss of our idols to wail?
When quick the fair face of the sky is transform'd,
And hurl'd in confusion the vapours are seen,
When driving Euroclydons, thick driving storms
Succeed to mild breezes and heavens serene;
Do such sudden changes in nature impress
Our minds how our prospects stern fate oft impedes;
How quick the transition from joy to distress,
How soon to prosperity trouble succeeds?
When lightnings fly glare thro' the azure expanse,
And rouse the most stupid to fear at the sight,
Do flames of conviction and penitence glance
Thro' our stupid hearts, and affect them aright?
While thro' the dark clouds the dread elements roll,
And thunder His praises who governs the spheres;
Have we the soft whispers of peace in the soul,
Th' assurance of safety when Jesus appears?
As down from the solstice thro' Virgo the sun,
With fleetness descending, cuts shorter his days,
And lingers his circuit nocturnal to run,
Withdrawing his influence, blunting his rays;
Is not this a lesson to teach us how fast
Our life is declining to death's cold embrace;
How soon the warm Summer of youth will be past,
And shadows of Autumn succeed to their place?
Do such admonitions, so solemn and just,
Lead deep to reflection our juvenile mind?
And will, when our bodies are laid in the dust,
Our souls a bright summer of happiness find?
KAPPA.

EXPOSITION OF MATTHEW, xi. 11.

Ferily I say unto you, among them that are born of women, there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding, he that is least in the kingdom of heaven, is greater than he. Matthew, xi. 11.

The following ingenious observations on the above text, concerning the meaning of which there has been much controversy, are from the Christian Spectator for August.—The writer, after giving the opinions of some popular authors, and his reasons against their theories, proceeds as follows:—

We now proceed to evince what seems the only genuine, and the richly excellent meaning of the passage. We shall first give the view, and then attempt its vindication as the only correct one.

John the Baptist is here considered in his official character and relative magnificence alone; he is viewed as the herald and harbinger of Messiah, a position of grandeur and a station of eminence which he occupies alone—of which he possesses the sublime and envied monopoly, as one "greater than a prophet;" his personal character, his gifts as a man, his piety as a Christian, his competency as a preacher, are wholly pre-termitted and excluded for the time; while his transcendent, and peculiar, and solitary greatness, as related to Messiah, to prophecy and to the church in many ages, is alone respected: now, in this view, he might be envied among his brethren, or overrated and even idolized, by them and others; but, says Christ, TO BE A REAL CHRISTIAN, yea, to be "the least" of the whole flock of the Redeemer, to be "the

least in the kingdom of heaven," is nobler, better, greater, and infinitely more to be desired, than to possess all the official and relative magnificence of John, or of any other dignitary that ever figured among men: more excellent than all the collective glory of office and of station in the world.

In support of this view, we submit the following considerations:—not aware that the same view is contained in any extant commentary or printed work, of whatsoever description.

1. Its intrinsic truth, importance, and applicableness to Christians and men of all ranks and ages. That the sentiment is true and salutary, will not, we think, be denied by any Christian, whether he accredits it as the right interpretation of the passage in question or not. To be a Christian—is moral excellence; is infinite opulence; is permanent, unfading bliss; is wisdom, peace, and blessedness; is assured preservation and infallible safety; is participation of "the divine nature," and communion with the ever blessed God, through his Son Jesus Christ; is certain destination to glory, and present possession of "eternal life;" is immortality beautified forever!—forever!—forever!—Great God! what meaneth this!—Thine own glory, and thine alone, is brighter! Thou alone canst comprehend that good unspeakable and unthinkable, which is realized to them that love thee!

And what is there for us in creation, conceivably equal, or for a moment to be compared to the infinite blessedness, and infinite magnificence of the Christian?—John might have been officially and relatively all that he was, and illicitly more—and yet, if he had not been a Christian, if he had not been himself "in the kingdom of heaven," he could never doubt in eternity, were it possible he could in time, that the meanest of the genuine worshippers of God was greater, better, happier than he? "The world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever."

The moral tendency of any interpretation, is no mean criterion of its claims. But what is the moral and spiritual tendency of the view we espouse? Is it not to exalt vital piety, personal religion, against all its most formidable enemies and rivals? Is it not to make us all think and feel that "a Christian is the highest style of man?" Is it not to throw the "vain pomp and glory of the world," and even the allied grandeur of the church, into concealment, subversion, and "dim eclipse," behind the surpassing excellence of "the least" of the company?

Whom God delights in, and in whom he dwells?
Is it not salutary to ministers of religion?—Suppose them exalted, prosperous, and envied, in all the relations of their awful function—it hints to the ear of conscience, how rapid this without more durable! to be a Christian, to be the humble ally and similar of the Son of God, to have a personal interest in the promises, and a peaceful consciousness of "acceptance in the Beloved," how much more excellent in itself and valuable to you, than the wealth of Cardinal Wolsey, the canonized fame of Becket, the learning of Erasmus, the splendours of Leo X., or even the better greatness "of John the Baptist!"—with nothing more! Be not dazzled then, be not dizzy with the trance or the fancy of those things which imply no moral excellence, and no exemption from the desolation of "the curse of the law," swollen in its tide with the unequalled freshest of "condemnation" from the gospel—the especial condemnation possibly of a self-seeking, worldly-minded, pompous hypocrite in robes of official sanctity!

To Christians what does it say? It says, envy no man; pine not at your obscurity of sphere; live in the light of God's countenance, and count his favour to be the supreme good. All official greatness in the church, is for the sake of pious greatness! is means to an end, scaffolding to a building, and service to sanctify. For the sake of the church all other things are made, upheld and providentially disposed. "For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might, through the thanksgiving of many, redound to the glory of God." Therefore let no man glory in men: for all things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, [or John the Baptist.] or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's.

Again, what would be the condition of the world, or the church, should the sentiment we advocate, universally prevail? Answer: a condition of universal benevolence and salvation—or, in short, millennial blessedness! Ambition, jealousy, Diotrephian annoyance, "the insolence of office," feuds, fights, and every evil, would disappear, and genuine, enduring goodness and enjoyment would overspread the earth! It would stimulate all the action, and "fill the ambition" of men, to be and to appear "great" as Christians. Then moral heroism, the arts and acts of pure philanthropy, the untold sublime of communicative goodness, would bless mankind, and spread the serenity and the fruitage of universal Eden through the world. That were "paradise that

knows no forfeiture," that hides no lurking adversary, and contains no interdicted tree.

2. We have one more general consideration to offer, in vindication of our view of the passage at the head of this article: it is the perfect congruity and natural consent of that view, with the scope of the whole context.

We have seen that the phrase the kingdom of heaven, is the pivot in every view upon which the meaning turns; while the general ambiguity of that phrase has occasioned all our obscurity and mistake. Our view supposes it here to express the state of the Christian, or genuine membership in the church of God; and so to be, in other words, as if he had said, a genuine worshipper, no matter in what age, is greater than all the official grandeur of John. Immediately after uttering this weighty argument, he adds—and shows the congruity of the subsequent context—"And from the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." There can be no doubt of the meaning of the phrase in this verse:—it is as if we should urge a sinner, in a time of revival, with the consideration, "this is the time for you to repent, and take the kingdom of heaven, or become a Christian." Now, if such be its meaning in the 12th verse, then such is its meaning in the eleventh; or there is a strange variation of the same phrase in the same continuity of discourse, and in two proximate verses. Besides, there is a natural and practical advance of thought in the twelfth verse, which is suggested by the forceful sentiment in that which precedes it. If all men, or any man soberly believed the former, such an one must be proportionately actuated in the way of the latter; if he thoroughly believed the sentiment, he would violently or vehemently put it in practice.

The context preceding from the beginning of the chapter is, we think, entirely in favor of our view. John was at the time confined by Herod Antipas, in a prison of Galilee. Jesus seems to have tried his faith in that obscure and painful solitude, by apparently neglecting to visit him. This, with other trials, was deeply troubling even to this heroic saint. His constancy seems to have forsaken him, while temptations thickened around him, and he even doubted whether or not Jesus was the Messiah! Hence he sends a deputation of two disciples to put the question directly to the Saviour, and to bring him a speedy reply. The answer we all know; and those who have pondered it, have seen also something of its incomparable excellence. After they had departed, Jesus, who had "increased" as John had "decreased"—"began to say unto the multitudes concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind?" for such he then appeared, in his wavering and weakness as a common man. He then inquires if worldly splendour had attracted them, if "gorgeous apparel and delicate" elegancies had presented the charm? Denying this, he asks, "But what went ye out to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet. For this is he of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, who shall prepare thy way before thee." Then follows the passage, "verily I say unto you, among them that are born of women, there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist; notwithstanding, he that is least in the kingdom of heaven, is greater than he. And from the days of John," &c.

The relative and official glory of John is here obviously respected, and not his personal sanctity and private character. This glory consisted in his relation and proximity to Messiah, as the herald of his wondrous way; in the actual moral service he was designated to perform, as the instrument of general rectification of manners, and the index finger of the hand of God, pointing the inquisitiveness of the nation to their true Messiah; in the conspicuity of prophetic anticipation, (see Is. xl. 3, and Mal. iv. 5, 6,) and of the church's consequent expectancy, for seven hundred years; and in the necessary monopoly of all this peculiar magnificence; for, though as a mere prophet he was one of a numerous class, yet, as "more than a prophet," as the morning star of the dawn of the perfect dispensation, and the harbinger of the rising of "the Sun of Righteousness with healing in his wings," he stood alone; his prophetic character was as solitary among prophets, as the priesthood of Melchisedec was of its own "order" among priests; he had no similar before him, and could have none after him; and if "the Scripture saith not in vain, the spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy," well might the Saviour administer the grand corrective, or rather preventive sentiment, that to be a Christian is better than all the exterior glory of Creation!

There is a case very parallel to this which may serve for a concluding illustration, at once of the consistency and the truth of the important view we have taken. "A certain woman of the company, lifted up her voice," (Luke xi. 27,) and pronounced a blessing on his mother, according to the strong national feeling of her Jewish sex. "But he said, yea, rather

er blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it;" as if he had said, a Christian, even the least, is more blessed, and more to be envied than is my mother, considered as such, with whatever relative glory, in human eyes, that circumstance may invest her. This sentiment is most appropriate against the dotage at once of Jewish mothers and of Roman christendom. How infatuated has been the veneration of millions, and hundreds of millions of nominal Christians, at the name, and the shrine, and the picture, and the image, of the "blessed virgin!" To be a Christian, says Christ, to "hear the word of God, and keep it," is incomparably "more blessed." But here he leaves the personal character and piety of his mother out of the account; and argues, as in the case of John, only from relative, nominal, recorded greatness; and as in the one case the piety of Mary is indubitable, and her excellency consisted in the fact that she was the disciple, as well as the mother of the Messiah; so in the other, the piety of John is indubitable and eminent, and his excellency consisted in being himself in the kingdom of heaven,—as without this it had still been "good" for him, as really as for Judas, "that he had never been born."

The subject is capable of much practical use and expansion. But we can only add (and how could we repress?) the reflections, that a real Christian is the character which every one should supremely labour to possess and exemplify in the world.—that a real Christian, when ascertained to be such, ought to be treated with the most affectionate consideration and regard,—that all other, and foreign greatness, in the world and in the church, is worthier to be pitied and deprecated, than envied and pursued in all the sublimary practice of men.—that the means of grace are incomparable blessings to a nation, and ought to be cherished and improved to eternal life, by all who enjoy them,—and finally, that the gospel ought to be propagated among the nations, till the whole world shall become the proper and actual jurisdiction of the kingdom of heaven.

NO. 38.

Of the evidence for the Divine authority of the New Testament, arising from miracles.

When persons profess to be the messengers of a revelation from God, whether in speech or writing, it is natural to ask, "What evidence do you produce for so high a claim?" They may say, "We are conscious to ourselves that we are inspired of God to declare his will to men, and we cannot doubt it."—But though this satisfies you, it does not satisfy my mind: it may be evidence to you, but it is none to me. If God give a revelation of his will, he will give evidence of this, not only to those whom he commissions to publish it, but to those whom he commands to receive it. This is but reasonable; and its reasonableness Christianity acknowledges.

Mahomet was able to produce no satisfactory external evidence of a divine mission. His kinsman Ali's reply to him is remarkable. "O prophet, whoever rises against thee, I will dash out his teeth, tear out his eyes, break his legs, rip up his belly." By such forcible arguments did the religion of the Koran make its way into the world. Had any of the writers of the New Testament spoken thus, an impartial jury would give a verdict instantly against them, and dismiss the cause. But like honest men, conscious of the validity of their mission, they lay before us their credentials; and intreat us to examine them with attention. In addition to the proofs arising out of the nature of the truths revealed, and the other considerations which have been noticed, they produce two kinds of evidence for our satisfaction; the one exhibiting a display of divine power, the other, a manifestation of divine knowledge and wisdom; or, in other words, MIRACLES AND PROPHECIES. More convincing proofs of God's interfering in an extraordinary manner to seal a commission from himself, it will be difficult to produce.—Miracles were confined to the age of those who laid claim to inspiration: they introduced the gospel to mankind; but the evidence of them descends in the form of testimony, from generation to generation. Prophecy, where it has respect to a course of events, increases the evidence from age to age, by the accomplishment of particular predictions.

These two branches have this in their favor, that they have approved themselves to the general judgment of mankind: for when any person pretended to a divine commission, the usual proof was a miracle, or a prediction. Whatever credit may be due to the claim, the kind of proof was looked upon to be good. Let us consider the validity of those adduced in favour of Christianity,—and in this chapter take a view of the miracles.—Bogue.

THE THRONE OF KING SOLOMON.

The following account of a curious piece of mechanism, is taken from a Persian manuscript, entitled "The History of Jerusalem." It is an account of the throne of King Solomon, and, we think surpasses any piece of mechanism produ-

ced in modern times, notwithstanding the wonderful inventions and improvements which have lately taken place in every branch of science.

This famous throne was the work of the Demon Sakur; it was called Koukbal Jinna. The beauty of this throne has never been sufficiently described; the following are, therefore, the particulars:—

The sides of it were of pure gold; the feet of emerald and rubies, intermixed with pearls, each of which was as big as an ostrich's egg. The throne had seven steps; on each side were delineated orchards full of trees, the branches of which were composed of precious stones representing fruit, ripe or unripe; on the tops of the trees were to be seen figures of beautiful plumaged birds, particularly the peacock, the etaub, and the kurves. All these birds were hollowed within artificially, so as occasionally to utter a thousand melodious notes, such as the ear of mortal has never heard. On the first step were delineated vine branches, having bunches of grapes, composed of various sorts of precious stones, fashioned in such a manner as to represent the different colours of purple, violet, green, and red, so as to render the appearance of real fruit. On the second step, on each side of the throne, were two lions of terrible aspect, as large as life, and formed of cast gold. The nature of this remarkable throne was such, that when the prophet Solomon placed his foot upon the first step, all the birds spread forth their wings, and made a fluttering noise in the air. On his touching the second step, the two lions expanded their claws. On his reaching the third, the whole assembly of demons and fairies and men, repeated the praises of the Deity. When he arrived at the fourth step voices were heard addressing him in the following manner:—"Son of David, be thankful for the blessing the Almighty has bestowed upon you." The same was repeated on his reaching the fifth step. On his touching the sixth, all the children of Israel joined them; and on his arrival at the seventh, all the throne, birds and animals became in motion, and ceased not until he had placed himself in the royal seat, when the birds, lions, and other animals, by secret springs, discharged a shower of the most precious perfumes on the prophet; after which two of the kurkeses, descending, placed a golden crown upon his head. Before the throne, was a column of burnished gold, on the top of which, was a golden dove, which held in its beak a volume bound in silver. In this book were written the Psalms of David; and the dove having presented the book to the king, he read aloud a portion of it to the children of Israel. It is further related, that on the approach of wicked persons to this throne, the lions were wont to set up a terrible roaring, and to lash their tails with violence; the birds also began to bristle up their feathers, and the assembly also of demons and geni to utter horrid cries; so that for the fear of them no person dared be guilty of falsehood, but confessed their crime.—Such was the throne of Solomon, the son of David.—Pensacola Gazette.

THE WISE SUNDAY SCHOLAR.

"I have learned to there," said a Sunday scholar of 8 years old to one of his class, pointing to John iii. 10; and by the expression of his countenance as he spoke, one would think he was conscious of having merited the commendation of the wise and good. "By attending the Sabbath School, and acquiring the knowledge," said a by-stander, "you are biasing your mind in favour of the Bible; which bias and prejudice will be hurtful to you, and disqualify you for judging of its truths or inspiration, when you are older." The lad replied, that "if the Scriptures are a fable, he could not know that fact, without a knowledge of them; and if they are indeed the word of God, he certainly could not know them too well."

Liberality.—At the union prayer meeting in this village, on the 9th inst. a collection was taken up in aid of the Domestic Missionary Society. Among the contributions for that object, was found enclosed in a letter from a "Female Friend of Missions," fifty dollars, as "a thank-offering for spiritual mercies."—Homer Obs.

Donations.—The Treasurer of the American Bible Society acknowledges the receipt of the following sums during the months of June and July:—Donation, \$1756 03—Contributions towards debt of Society's house, \$290.—In payment for Bibles, &c. \$5318 25—Total, \$7364 83.

Dr. Franklin observed: "The eyes of other people are the eyes that ruin us. If all but myself were blind, I should want neither fine houses nor fine furniture."

REMEDIES.—For the gout, toast and water; for bile, exercise; for corns, easy shoes; for rheumatism, new flannel and patience; for the tooth-ache, pluck it out; and for loss, matrimony.

Introduction of side saddles into England.—Richard II. at the early age of sixteen, had married (1382) the sister of the Emperor Wincentius, whose many virtues acquired for her the appellation of Good Queen Anne; but she is perhaps more celebrated for having introduced the use of side saddles into England, before which time the ladies rode like the men.